



The Architect

Architect Robert Reamer brought a different vision with him to Yellowstone. He believed it was possible to create a structure that would appear to have grown out of its surroundings, a structure inside and out that would seem to be an extension of the wilderness. At the same time, he believed that a hotel such as this could provide all the modern conveniences that any world-class hotel offered. He believed that hotel guests could feel completely secure while at the same time feel connected to the wilderness outside.

Reamer’s vision as embodied in the Old Faithful Inn caused a revolution in architecture in

national parks that has continued to this day. His style of architecture, where the building is designed to fit into the landscape, is called “rustic architecture” or “parkitecture.”

While the Old Faithful Inn is Reamer’s most famous design, it is not his only Yellowstone project. After completing the Inn, Reamer designed and oversaw construction of the Grand Canyon Hotel; the Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel, Executive House, and Mammoth cottages; and the renovation of the Lake Hotel. In addition to the rustic style, his various designs incorporated the Prairie, neo-classical, and colonial styles, depending on the setting.



Robert C. Reamer

*To be at discord with the landscape would be almost a crime.
To try to improve upon it would be an impertinence.
—Robert Reamer*

Anniversary
Events

Tuesday, June 1
1–4 PM
U.S. Postal Pictorial
Cancellation Stamp
Lobby of the Inn

To celebrate the actual day of opening, join the Old Faithful Post Office staff for a pictorial stamp cancellation.

June 19–20
August 28-29
All weekend
Xanterra Heritage Days
Vicinity of the Inn
*Special programs and activities.
Details at the Old Faithful Inn.*

All Summer
Interpretive Programs
Old Faithful Inn
Explore the Old Faithful Inn with a costumed tour guide from Xanterra Parks and Resorts.

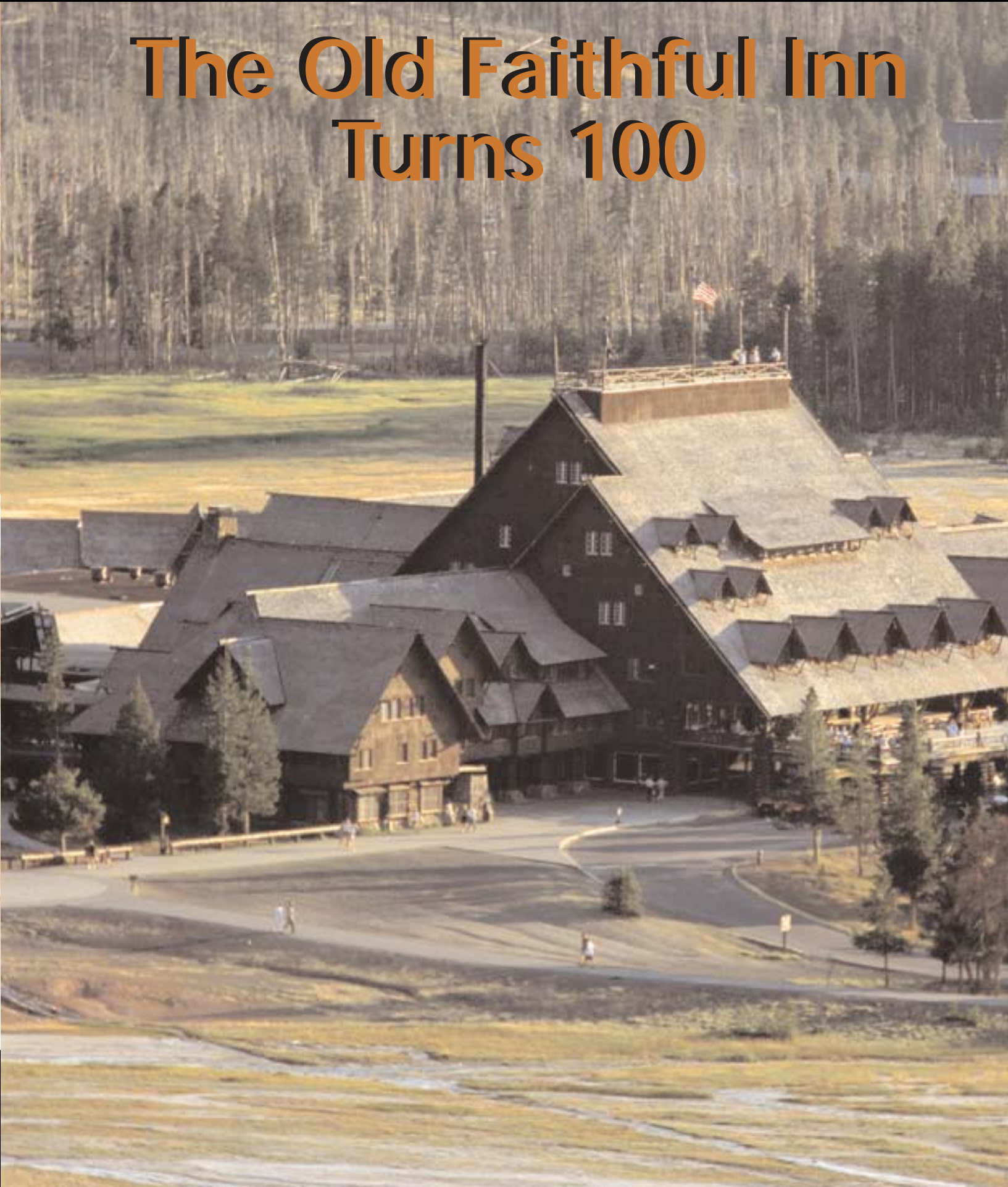
Old Faithful Area
Explore Old Faithful’s astounding hydrothermal resources with a National Park Service interpretive ranger. Details at the Old Faithful Visitor Center.

Exhibits
Old Faithful Inn
Enjoy special exhibits all summer in the lobby.

*The following photographers generously allowed the use of their images in this publication:
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The Old Faithful Inn
Turns 100



The Old Faithful Inn appears to have grown out of the very ground on which it sits. Evoking the surrounding wilderness, the Inn is a human-made complement to the unmatched marvel of the inspiring Upper Geyser Basin and the one-of-a-kind Old Faithful Geyser. With its imposing scale; informal massing; and great, pitched roof, the Old Faithful Inn architecturally echoes the shapes of the surrounding mountains.

The Inn was commissioned by early park concessioners in 1902 and designed by the 29-year-old architect Robert C. Reamer. The building was constructed in three major phases. The original center section—the prominent gable roof covering the immense lobby, the dining rooms, kitchen wing, and two guest room wings—was built in the fall, winter, and spring of 1903-1904. The east wing guest rooms were completed in 1913-1914; the west wing in 1927.

Lodgepole pines and massive stones figure prominently in the construction material of the Inn, a building sometimes advertised as the world’s largest log hotel. While the outside walls are bolstered and ornamented with lodgepole pine, it is from within the immense lobby that one sees what can be done with these logs. The view allows one to gain respect for a now-vanished class of craftsmen who, with adz and ax, hammer, and saw, were able to create such fascinating yet sturdy designs. That these craftsmen

were able to artfully incorporate a forest of logs with deformities, knobs, burls, and strange turns and twists is especially striking.

The great stone fireplace is another compelling feature of the lobby. In reality, four fireplaces feed into one great chimney. Because the spacious and lofty lobby accentuates the coolness of the surrounding mountains, a fire can be enjoyed even in August.

The idea of designing with nature flourished in the National Park Service during the early decades of the twentieth century Architects, landscape architects, and engineers combined native wood and stone to create appealing structures that seemed to fit naturally within the majestic park landscapes. Influential professionals like Mary Colter, Herbert Maier, Robert C. Reamer, and Thomas C. Vint applied these principles to their structures, landscapes, and road systems throughout the national park system. The whimsical term “Parkitecture” has been used to describe these popular National Park Service structures.



Burled pine was used in staircases and other details of the Inn.



Old Faithful Geyser is still as spectacular as it was a century ago.



Winter blankets the Old Faithful Inn with snow. While the Inn is not open in the winter, visitors can stay at the nearby Snow Lodge.

About the Inn

- ❖ The builders obtained materials from within the park. They used lodgepole pine inside, volcanic rock for the fireplaces, and obsidian sand in the concrete.
- ❖ In 1904, the Inn had 140 guest rooms; today it has 327.
- ❖ The lobby is six stories high.
- ❖ The Inn’s original door key resides in the park’s museum collection, one of almost 3,000 museum items related to the Inn.
- ❖ The lobby rafters have been cleaned by people using climbing gear, housekeepers using long knotted strings of sheets, and by compressed air.
- ❖ Approximately 350 employees work at the Inn each year.
- ❖ Movie and TV stars who have stayed at the inn include Henry Fonda, Vincent Price, the Three Stooges, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Michael J. Fox, and Jason Alexander.
- ❖ Many U.S. Presidents have visited the Inn, including Warren G. Harding, Calvin Coolidge, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and William Clinton.

